

A Foundation for Customer Service at FEMA: **Doing the Right Thing**

DF437 : Instructor's Guide

*Federal Emergency Management Agency – Disaster Field Training Operations
March 26, 2003*

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Increase awareness of values that support our culture of doing the right thing for both internal and external customers.
2. Emphasize the importance of providing both the desired end product and high quality customer service.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

The target audience for this course is all FEMA employees.

APPROXIMATE TIME:

4 Hours

CONTENTS:

UNIT I: Introduction
20 Minutes

UNIT II: Is Anyone Besides Us Interested in Customer Service?
1 Hour 15 Minutes

UNIT III: Are Customers Hostile Strangers or Fellow Citizens?
1 Hour 15 Minutes

UNIT IV: How Do I See Customer Service?
30 Minutes

UNIT V: Course Summary and Evaluation
30 Minutes

UNIT I *Introduction*

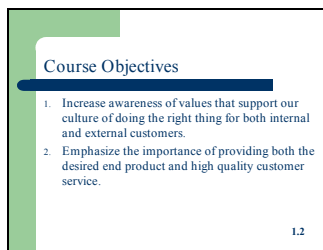
Visual 1.1



Course Introduction

Distribute Student Materials.

Visual 1.2



“A Foundation of Customer Service At FEMA: Doing the Right Thing”
Course Objectives:

- Increase awareness of values that support our culture of doing the right thing for both internal and external customers.
- Emphasize the importance of providing both the desired end product and high quality customer service.

Cover these key points:

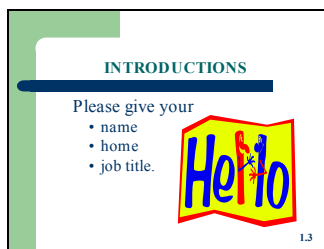
Basis of Course

- This course is meant to provide you with information about the basis of customer service in FEMA – to make you aware of FEMA’s customer orientation.
- It is the WHY of customer service. The course presents the fact that The President has called for citizen-centered government, and in FEMA, we want to support his call.
- The course also looks at the culture and climate of CS in FEMA at this time. You will see that customer service is embedded in the core values of the agency.
- This course is not a how-to course. It is not a “methods” course, but a “foundations” course. Methods are important but there are many opportunities and venues to gain new skills – communications courses, ethics courses, ERO courses, etc. We expect you to take such courses and grow in skills.

Basis of Course *(continued)*

- There will be some discussion of customer service skills issues, but our emphasis will be essentially the moral issues of customer service.
 - The course stresses being aware of behavior – yours and your customers'. Being aware of the people behind the behavior leads to improved interactions, and professional behavior becomes gracious, helpful behavior.
 - End result of the course should be to help you internalize FEMA's customer service goals.
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- **Internal-External Customers:**
 - The course is about people, attitudes and behaviors. Positive relationships among internal FEMA customers can't be overemphasized.
 - FEMA's success depends on good service to internal customers, because this ultimately guides our relations with external customers.
 - There have been several surveys completed, searching for statistics on the topic of customer service. One I heard about was taken in a hospital, and did not survey a single patient. Instead, employees were surveyed to discover their level of satisfaction. The belief was that if internal customers were being satisfied, it would naturally follow that external customers (patients) were satisfied as well.

Visual 1.3



Introductions

Please give your name, home and job title.

Transition to next Unit

We will begin the next unit with a video, and as you watch it, think about different types of customer service.

UNIT II *Are We the Only Ones Interested In Customer Service?*

Unit Objectives

1. Given a video, identify two difficulties that providers of customer service for government entities experience.
2. State the principle in the President's Management Agenda that pertains to customer service.
3. List two initiatives under that principle.
4. Name three of FEMA's Core Values that relate directly to customers.

Video

“The Other Side of the Window”

Discussion

- You will see a video that shows customers being served. Afterwards, we will discuss what we saw on the video.
- Possible discussion topics/questions:
 - What did you notice about the people on the inside of the windows?
 - What were the attitudes, habits, and actions of the customer service providers? Consider the difficulties of their jobs.
 - What do you think were the feelings of the government worker as he went from errand to errand?

Exercise
25 Minutes

My View of Customer Service **Refer to Student Materials Page 1**

Customer Service Factors

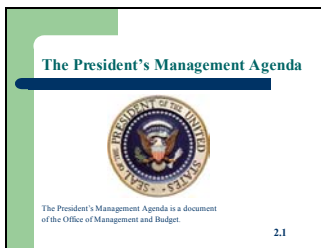
Value
Respect
Responsiveness
Reliability
Efficiency
Integrity
Empathy
Flexibility
Communication
Accountability
Focus
Responsibility
Trust
Expectations
Morale
Compassion
Tangibles

My View of Customer Service (continued)

- Based on what you saw in the video, our brief discussion and **your own values**, please prepare a statement that tells what your view is of customer service.
- The statement should be about **45 seconds** long.
- You may use words from the handout if you like.
- **Examples** of statements would be:
 - “Working in an organization where there is no concern for customer service makes for terrible morale.”
 - “When I am the customer, I try to be reasonable, but I want satisfaction.”
 - “I think customer service people should be more sympathetic.”
- **Ask** for volunteers or call on people randomly. Make sure each participant shares a statement.

Presentation

Visual 2.1



The President's Management Agenda

Refer to Student Materials Page 2

Information for this section has been pulled from the actual document which can be found at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2002/mgmt.pdf>

Visual 2.2



- The President's Vision for Government Reform includes three principles. They state that government should be:
 - citizen-centered, not bureaucracy centered.
 - results-oriented.
 - market based, actively promoting rather than stifling innovation through competition.
- For the purposes of this class, we are only concerned with the first.
- Under this principle are two initiatives:
 - Strategic Management of Human Capital (internal customers)
 - Make Government Citizen Centered (external customers)

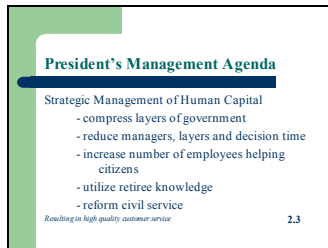
The President's Management Agenda (continued)

- The focus is customer relations not customer processes.

Strategic Management of Human Capital (Internal) – The Initiative:

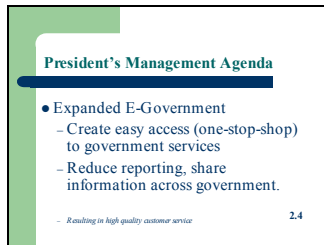
- Compress layers of government to reduce the distance between citizens and decision makers.
- Reduce managers, layers and decision time to increase the number of employees who provide services to citizens.
- Utilize retiree knowledge by adopting information technology systems, which capture these skills and knowledge.
- While the Administration will be seeking some targeted civil service reforms, agencies must make better use of the flexibilities currently in place to acquire and develop talent and leadership.

Visual 2.3



- Expected short-term results of these initiatives are as follows:
 - Human capital strategies will be linked to organizational mission, vision, core values, and objectives.
 - Agencies will use strategic workforce planning and flexible tools to recruit, retrain, and reward new or potential employees.
 - Agencies will determine their “core competencies” and decide whether to build internal capacity, or contract for services from the private sector. This will maximize agencies’ flexibility in getting the job done effectively and efficiently.
- Expected long-term results:
 - Citizens will recognize improved service and performance, citizen satisfaction will increase.
 - Agencies will build, sustain, and effectively deploy the skilled, knowledgeable, diverse, and high-performance workforce needed to meet the current and emerging needs of government and its citizens.
 - The workforce will adapt quickly in size, composition, and competencies to accommodate changes in mission, technology, and labor markets.
 - Government employee satisfaction will increase.

Visual 2.4



Make Government Citizen Centered (External) – The Initiative:

- E-government strategies will be expanded to support projects that offer performance gains, such as e-procurement, e-grants, and e-signatures.
- The Administration will manage E-government projects more effectively through the budget process and identify problems that arise in the advances of these projects.
- There will be a task force of selected agency personnel to identify and monitor E-government projects. The task force will:
 - create single points of access to government services and improve the Federal governments' use of the web. Expanding the FirstGov website will be the beginning point of this issue.
 - reduce the reporting burden on businesses. They should not have to file the same information repeatedly because government cannot reuse the data appropriately, or fails to use electronic transaction protocols.
 - Share information more quickly and conveniently between federal and state, local, and tribal governments. Foreign collaboration is an issue as well.

Expected results:

- Provide high quality customer service regardless of whether the citizen contacts the agency via phone, web, or in person.
- Reduce the expense and difficulty of doing business with the government.
- Provide citizens with better access to government services.
- Cut government operating costs and make them more accountable.
- Increase access for persons with disabilities to agency websites and E-government applications.

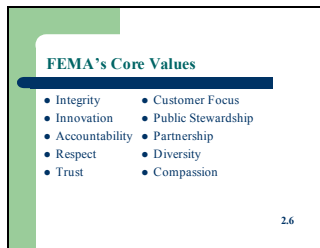
Show Visual 2.5. FEMA Strategic Plan with FEMA seal.

Core Values: Refer students to SM page 3.

FEMA's Core Values

Integrity	Customer Focus
Innovation	Public Stewardship
Accountability	Partnership
Respect	Diversity
Trust	Compassion

Visual 2.6



Conduct a discussion on the Core Values:

- How do these values connect to customer service?
- Which ones seem most important when thinking about customers?
- How does all of this relate to the concept of skill issues/moral issues in dealing with customers?

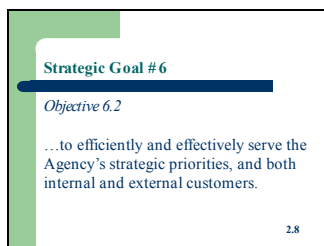
Visual 2.7



FEMA Strategic Goal #6 Make FEMA a world-class enterprise.

- FEMA's Strategic Plan has 6 goals. Goal #5 "Creating a motivating and challenging work environment for employees" describes how FEMA's management assists in improving internal customer satisfaction (making things better for the employees)
- In Goal # 6 we see a collaborative effort on the part of the employees to make FEMA a world-class enterprise. This effort is aimed at improving both internal and external customer satisfaction. Specifically, objectives 6.2, 6.4, and 6.5 address this issue.

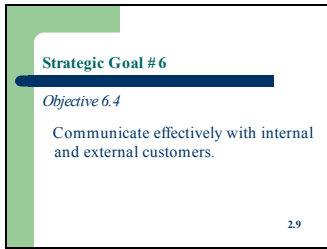
Visual 2.8



Objective 6.2

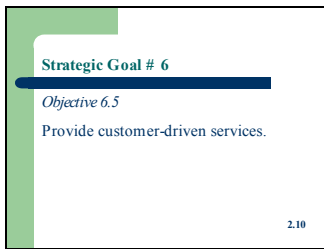
To serve the Agency's strategic priorities, internal, and external customers with efficiency and effectiveness.

Visual 2.9



Objective 6.4
Effective communication with internal and external customers.

Visual 2.10

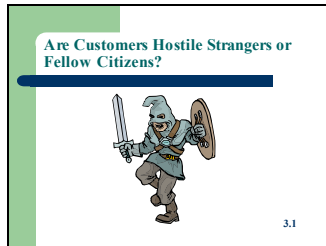


Objective 6.5
Provide customer-oriented services.

- What are your interpretations of these objectives?
- Here are some possible topics for discussion
 - o What do you think is the meaning of Objective 6.2? (Maintaining a balance between process and product.)
 - o How do these objectives affect us as employees?
 - o How do they affect survivors of disasters?
 - o How can we respond to these objectives as individuals?

Unit III *Are Customers Hostile Strangers or Fellow Citizens?*

Visual 3.1



Caring About People and Working Relationships

Acknowledging Behavior

Video –“But I Don’t Have Customers”

Tell participants:

- This video illustrates a situation in an Information Technology department, but the situation applies to all and any department or area.

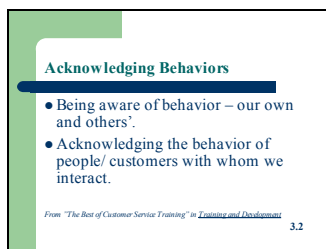
Discussion questions about the video:

- What changes did Charley go through during the film?
- What do I think a survey would show about our staff?
- What is a customer?
- What were the two kinds of internal customers pointed out in the film?
- What were several of the implied results of poor internal service?

Conduct a discussion about the video.

- What changes did Charley go through during the film?
- Name two kinds of internal customers.(Employees of other departments, Members of the team itself.)
- What were the implications of the kind of internal customer service shown in the film? (Jobs might be lost. People were disappointed. Employees could not do their work effectively. Charley had a bad reputation.)
- Who are the customers of your department/section?

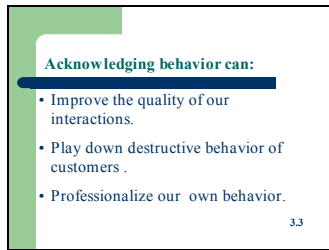
Visual 3.2



Acknowledging behaviors

- Being aware of our own behavior and of the customers’ behavior.
- Remembering that there are reasons why others behave as they do.
- Playing down the destructive behavior of customers while deliberately professionalizing our own behavior.

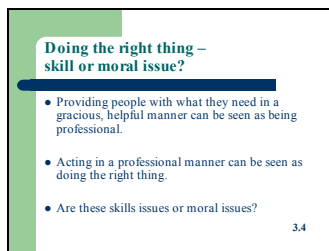
Visual 3.3



Acknowledging behavior can:

- Improve the quality of our interactions.
- Decrease negative behavior of customers.
- Reinforce our professional behavior.

Visual 3.4



Doing the Right Thing:

Controlling our behavior and minimizing customers' negative behavior can be seen as doing the right thing.

Providing people what they need in a gracious helpful manner can equate with being professional.

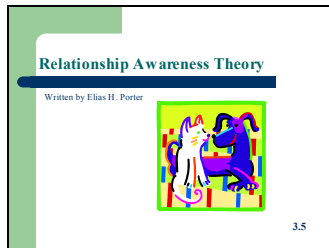
Question – Is this a skill issue or a moral issue? Do the skill and the moral combine/ Allow for some discussion of this interesting question.

Acknowledging others' behavior improves our ability to interact with them – it improves the quality of our interactions.

Talking points

- Being aware of the reasons for peoples' behavior.
- Understanding their circumstances, their situation.
- Acknowledging the customer as an individual with biases, attitudes and situational based emotions, not just as the next object on the assembly line.
- You may not be able to solve the customer's problem until you understand the emotional reasons for the behavior.
- Ensuring that conventions of courtesy rituals are observed in order to diffuse volatile emotional states.

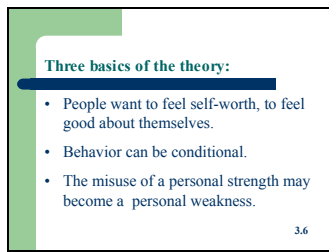
Visual 3.5



Relationship Awareness Theory

Relationship Awareness Theory
Written by Elias H. Porter

Visual 3.6



Three basics of the theory:

1. People want to feel good about themselves.
2. Behavior can be conditional.
3. Behavior is based on core values/ motivations.

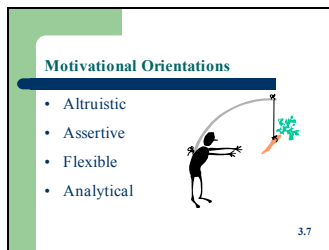
Talking Points:

- Individuals want to maintain their self-worth, to feel good about themselves. They base their behavior on core values and motivations.
- Their behavior is often based on conditions. If things are going well for a person, he/she will exhibit one set of behaviors. When the situation changes because of stress or conflict, the person may exhibit other behaviors. All the behaviors are consistent with their core values and with trying to maintain their self-worth.
- Personal weaknesses are inappropriate use of personal strength. If people use their strengths in appropriate ways, it will lead to improved relationships.

Motivational Orientations

Present a brief explanation of the four different orientations.

Visual 3.7



- **Assertive-**
These people are self-confident, ambitious, persuasive, forceful, quick to act, imaginative, bold, risk taking, and seem fearless. They achieve their goals through influencing situations and activities of others. Basic gratification comes from accomplishing tasks and organizing resources to fit their needs.
- **Altruistic-**
This group of people behaves in a passive manner. They are trusting, optimistic, loyal, devoted, caring, supportive, accepting, adaptable, and modest. Their top priority lies within the welfare of others. They tend to want to be nurtured by others without demanding direct material rewards in return.
- **Flexible-**
They are chameleons to their surroundings. Characteristics they possess include empathy with a variety of different types of people, situations, and challenges. They are flexible in approach, able to change easily to relate to others. They seek to find the need of the group in order to meet that need. They are good at researching and envisioning each side of a situation. They place the achievement of meeting the needs of the moment while maintaining complete flexibility at the top of their priorities. Basic gratification comes from the achievement of tasks using situationally appropriate means.
- **Analytical-**
This is when an individual behaves in patterns of ways that can be characterized as cautious, practical, economical, reserved, methodical, analytic, principled, orderly, fair, preserving, conserving of resources, and so on. They place the achievement of self-reliance, self-sufficiency, and self-dependence at the top of their priorities. Their basic gratification comes from the achievement of meaningful order.

Motivational Orientations

Exercise
15 Minutes

Refer participants to Motivational Orientation Checklist in their Student Materials Page 4

- Mark with checks the adjectives that apply to yourselves or that others have applied you.
- When that is completed, total the number in each column. The column with the most checks should estimate your motivational orientation.
- Determine which column describes each orientation.
- Now put two checks by the six words that indicate your greatest strengths.
- Identify your six greatest strengths.

Refer participants to the “Strengths You May Overdo” Checklist Student Materials page 5

Exercise
25 Minutes

Refer participants to the Student Handout packet – page 6 & 7 Case Studies and Customer Relations Response to Behaviors.

Use this chart to develop a response to each case. You may form groups of two or small groups to formulate responses to each case, showing the response believed to work best for the situation.

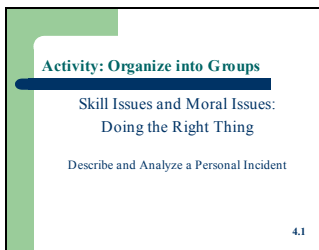
After groups have discussed the cases, open the floor to classroom discussion. Write conclusions on easel charts.

Unit IV **How Do I See Customer Service?** :

Analyzing Customer Service.

Exercise
20 Minutes

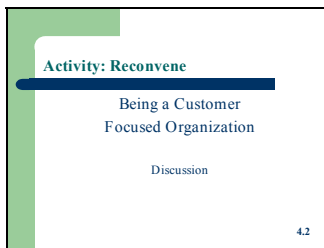
Visual 4.1



Organize groups of two to:

- Describe and analyze a Personal Incident
- Consider ways to produce good customer interactions.
- Consider how the difficulties of the situation might have been neutralized in terms of validation of the people involved.
- Consider how the situation could be improved with concern for the moral issues present in an interaction between individuals.

Visual 4.2



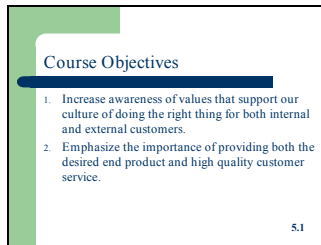
Reconvene the large group and conduct a discussion about their conclusions from the personal incidents they heard.

Limit discussion to 10 Minutes.

UNIT V- Summary, Knowledge Review, Closing

Review of Course Objective

Visual 5.1



Ask participants

- Did we meet our objective?
- What are your questions, follow-up, and comments?
- **Conduct** a discussion in one of several possible ways.
 - **Have** each group report back, telling what their questions were and giving the answers.
 - **Ask** if there are specific questions and decide on the correct answers together.
 - **Ask** individuals to volunteer comments or observations, or ask questions.

Student Materials Page 8

Use this handout as the basis of the final knowledge review.

FOUNDATIONS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE AT FEMA

Course Knowledge Review

1. What are two bases of the mandate for providing positive customer service at FEMA?
2. What are the three basic principles of The President's management agenda?
3. State FEMA's Strategic Goal #6.
4. Which three objectives under that goal specifically relate to customer service?
5. Core Values??
6. Name one of the three basics of Porter's Relationship Awareness Theory.
7. What are the four Motivational Orientations, according to Porter?
8. What is meant by the difference in skills issues and moral issues of customer service at FEMA?
9. What is your understanding of "Do the right thing" in the context of this course?
10. What are two implications of poor service to internal customers?

Course Closing

- Ask participants for final comments, questions, and observations
- Distribute evaluation forms.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES: